

**20th
Biennale
of Sydney**

**18 MARCH —
05 JUNE 2016**

BIENNALE OF SYDNEY LIMITED
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**THE FUTURE IS
ALREADY HERE
— IT'S JUST
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20th Biennale of Sydney
Media Release
4 February 2016

**20th Biennale of Sydney announces public
programs and highlight performances presented across seven
'embassies of thought'**



Sydney, Australia: The 20th Biennale of Sydney today announced details of selected performances and public programs presented around Sydney from 18 March until 5 June 2016, exploring themes in the exhibition curated by Artistic Director Stephanie Rosenthal and titled *The future is already here — it's just not evenly distributed*. Visitors to Australia's largest contemporary art event are invited to engage with the 20th Biennale through daily guided tours, artist and curator talks, lectures, performances, workshops, salons, reading groups and gatherings held across the seven venues, or 'embassies of thought'.

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Biennale Opening Night: the must have ticket in March. Presented on Friday, 18 March on Cockatoo Island, **Biennale Opening Night** offers the unique opportunity to view the art after dark, with ambitious installations and amazing artworks lit for one night only. Guests will also be treated to a performance by boychild, a persona born on stage in San Francisco's thriving queer club scene. Taking place within **Korakrit Arunanondchai's** denim-clad installation, boychild's dynamic performance, accompanied by a live percussive score, will recast her body as cyborg. **Biennale Opening Night** also features renowned Sydney DJs and live acts. Food and beverages will be available to purchase, with some of Sydney's best food trucks on hand. Limited tickets are available for \$35 per person from 20bos.com.

Also on **Cockatoo Island** (Embassy of the Real) artist **Justene Williams** collaborates with **Sydney Chamber Opera** to present *Victory Over the Sun*; a radical revisiting of the legendary Futurist (anti-)opera first performed in St Petersburg, Russia in December 1913. The performance will be presented during the Biennale's opening weekend from Friday, 18 until Sunday, 20 March. Limited tickets are available for \$25 per person from 20bos.com. On Sunday, 29 May Cockatoo Island will host an **Internet Yami-Ichi** – or internet black market – first presented in Tokyo by IDPW (a 'secret society on the internet that goes back more than 100 years'). The Yami-Ichi is a physical space where people can buy and sell goods or services inspired by the world we experience online.

An 'in-between' project positioned on the **Museum of Contemporary Art Australia** forecourt, **Richard Bell's** latest iteration of *Embassy* (2013-16) is a restaging of and homage to the original Aboriginal Tent Embassy that was first assembled by activists on the lawn of Parliament House, Canberra, in 1972. Bell's *Embassy* serves as the setting for a series of screenings and talks with special guests, including Gary Foley, Emory Douglas, Jenny Munro and Lyall Munro Jnr, presented from Thursday, 17 to Saturday, 19 March and Friday, 13 to Sunday, 15 May.

Also at the **Museum of Contemporary Art Australia** (Embassy of Translation), two dancers and an arts writer have been 'hired' for Adam Linder's *Some Proximity* – one of the artist's 'Choreographic Services' that will take place daily between Saturday, 19 and Monday, 21 March.

At the **Art Gallery of New South Wales** (Embassy of Spirits), a month-long chain performance titled *ghost telephone*, curated by 20th Biennale attaché Adrian Heathfield, will feature a series of interlinked performances from internationally renowned artists, presented daily from Tuesday, 15 March until Friday, 15 April. Working in situ, performers will channel and transform the spirits of specially chosen art works currently on display. Adrian Heathfield will also present the **Nick Waterlow OAM Memorial Lecture**, 'Spirited Affinities', on Saturday, 19 March at 2.30 pm in the Gallery's Domain Theatre.

The Embassy of Spirits will present artist **Mella Jaarsma's** *Dogwalk* (2015-16); an installation of costumes activated through performances on Saturday, 19 and Sunday, 20 March and every Wednesday evening at the Gallery. Dr Stephanie Rosenthal, 20th Biennale of Sydney Artistic Director, will give a free exhibition talk at the Gallery on Wednesday, 30 March at 5.30 pm.

At **Mortuary Station** (Embassy of Transition), **Transition Talks** will be presented free to the public across three Saturdays (26 March, 16 April and 21 May), featuring local guest speakers and artist **Marco Chiandetti** whose work will be presented within the venue – a former 19th century funerary railway station. Tibetologist and Buddhism expert Dr Diana Cousens will discuss transitioning to the afterlife and *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, which also features in the work of Embassy of Transition artist, **Charwei Tsai**.

Carriageworks (Embassy of Disappearance) will host the **20th Biennale of Sydney Keynote Address** by **Boris Charmatz** on Saturday, 19 March. Charmatz is a radical innovator of dance. Over the past twenty years in his work as a dancer and choreographer he has explored the relationship between art and philosophy, challenging preconceived notions of dance in the process. Charmatz has presented

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work in numerous contexts internationally – in theatres, festivals, and at institutions including the Museum of Modern Art, New York, and Tate Modern, London. Tickets to the Keynote Address also include advance access to a one-off performance and Australian premiere of Charmatz's work *manger* (2014).

Other highlight performance works at Carriageworks include **Mike Parr's** new work *BDH* (2016), to be presented on Thursday, 17 March at 6 pm, and **Lee Mingwei's** *Guernica in Sand* (2006/16) performed on Saturday, 23 April at which time the artist and his collaborators will transform the sand recreation of Picasso's famous painting into an entirely new work.

Artspace (Embassy of Non-Participation) co-hosts **The Bureau of Writing**, a collaborative writing program that blurs the distinction between artist and writer, highlighting experimental practices and histories in the process. Inspired by themes in the Biennale, the program sees Australian and international artists, curators, writers and academics participate in a series of workshops and events leading up to and during the dates of the 20th Biennale.

In addition to activities taking place in and around the Embassies, a series of events are planned for in-between spaces and online. The **Not Evenly Distributed** series is a program of talks taking place locally and internationally to explore the uneven spread of technologies and resources, access to citizenship and political rights in the world today, and the uses and effects of digital technologies in different contexts.

Several exercises in 'practical futuring' will take place during the Biennale, including the inaugural, 24-hour meeting of the **Assembly for Alternative Futures** convened by Kelly Doley, artist and member of 20th Biennale participating artist group Brown Council. A number of **Arts Futuring** sessions will be presented by Sydney initiative Frontyard, a community skill-sharing space and hub for ongoing investigations into how we can survive as a community of artists and arts lovers.

With Critical Path, the Biennale will co-present two projects: **Assembly** by Nicola Conibere, a three-day live work that acknowledges the spectator's unique presence without asking them to do more than watch; and **TRANSCENDING, for Peace**, a performance by Lilach Livne that invites participants to be a part of a 75-minute temporary community, reshaping our perception of the other.

A trio of events focusing on performance occur at different venues throughout the exhibition, including a lecture by 20th Biennale attaché **André Lepecki**, a one-day 'salon' exploring choreography in the gallery context, and a mini-symposium presenting reflections both on performance in the 20th Biennale and in the wider field. This **Performance Talks** series is presented in partnership with the Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences at the University of New South Wales.

To view more detailed information on performances, activities and programs initiated by artists in the 20th Biennale of Sydney please visit 20bos.com.

– *Ends* –

MEDIA CONTACTS: For further information and to request interviews and images relating to the 20th Biennale of Sydney, please contact:

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MEDIA IMAGES: Please visit http://bit.ly/20BOS_Medialimages to access press images with captions.

KEY DATES & DETAILS:

Media Preview: Tuesday, 15 March 2016 – please register interest with kym@articulatepr.com.au

- Vernissage: Tuesday, 15 March until Thursday, 17 March 2016
- Public dates: Friday, 18 March until Sunday, 5 June 2016
- Entry to the Biennale of Sydney is free to the public

ABOUT THE BIENNALE OF SYDNEY: Since its inception in 1973, the Biennale of Sydney has provided a platform for art and ideas, showcasing the work of nearly 1,700 artists from more than 100 countries. Today it is considered one of the leading international art events, recognised for commissioning and presenting provocative, thought provoking art from Australia and around the world. In 2014, the 19th Biennale of Sydney attracted more than 623,000 visits. With 40 per cent of visits made by people from outside of Sydney, the Biennale holds an important place on both the national and international stage.